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## USDA Announces \$1.3 Million to Improve Housing in Five Tribal Communities

U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development South Dakota Acting State Director Bruce Jones today highlighted the Department's active partnership with Native American tribes in South Dakota and throughout the nation.

"I am proud to highlight USDA's work to support Native American communities," Jones said. "USDA offers a variety of housing, business and utilities programs to help address the education and health care needs of the Oglala Sioux Tribe and those of Native American tribes across the nation."

Jones announced that USDA is awarding Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation a \$300,000 Mutual Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance grant to help strengthen its capacity to provide affordable housing opportunities.

Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation will use its Mutual Self-Help grant to help tribal members build 12 homes over the next two years.

Under the Self-Help program, participants provide at least 65 percent of the construction labor on each other's homes, with technical assistance from the organization overseeing the project. This reduces the total cost of buying a home, allowing many people to own houses that otherwise would have been out of reach.

Jones also highlighted today that four other federally recognized Tribes are receiving funding through USDA's Mutual Self-Help program. The recipients are:

New Mexico

- Zuni Housing Authority – \$279,000 grant to assist 12 low-income families of the Zuni Tribe build homes in McKinley County

North Carolina

- North Carolina Indian Housing Authority – \$204,000 grant to provide technical assistance to the Lumbee and Tuscarora Tribes to build eight homes in Cumberland, Robeson and Hoke counties over two years

Washington

- Spokane Indian Housing Authority – \$292,000 grant to provide technical and supervisory assistance to the Spokane Indian Tribe in Stevens County; community members plan to build 11 homes

Wisconsin

- Lac Courte Oreilles Housing Authority - \$289,000 grant to The Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians Housing Authority to provide technical assistance to 10 families to build their own and each other's homes. The Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians is the first federally recognized tribe in Wisconsin to receive a USDA Self-Help grant.

Funding of each award announced today is contingent upon the recipient meeting the terms of the grant agreement.

Since the start of the Obama Administration, USDA has provided \$3.4 million for 13 self-help grants that have helped build nearly 200 homes in tribal communities.

USDA is celebrating National Native American Heritage Month this November. USDA is proud of its support of Tribal Nations and its work throughout Indian Country and Alaska.

President Obama's plan for rural America has brought about historic investment and resulted in stronger rural communities. Under the President's leadership, these investments in housing, community facilities, businesses and infrastructure have empowered rural America to continue leading the way – strengthening America's economy, small towns and rural communities.

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